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of older origin that conception of things supernatural, wherefore it follows that purely decorative art must be older that magic art.

In the course of time, ornaments have, from a variety of reasons, become attributed with magical properties, *without having, on that account, necessarily lost their character of being ornaments.*[1] At a still later stage it happens that the supernatural properties that once were ascribed to the objects are considered unimportant, and therefore by degrees fall into oblivion. Probably the Choroti will soon arrive at this stage of development in respect of their ornamental objects, and thus Karsten has rendered a very important service to science by having ›fixed‹, so to speak, this stage of the evolution of Choroti culture, even if he, as is my opinion, at times overshoots the mark by giving undue prominence to the magic side of the question.

Singing, dancing, drum-beating and rattle-shaking are by the Choroti regarded as potent in incantation and exorcism. This is a well known fact, to which I have also referred on pp. 182, 183 in my account of a funeral dance which took place in a Choroti village.[2] That blowing a kind of disc shaped whistle is done for the purpose of driving away evil spirits I have already mentioned (p. 144). As regards the supposed magical character of a game of chance called ›chuke‹, I also beg to refer to what I have said in the foregoing (see p. 155).

A popular belief, which is to be met with practically all over the world, is that the mental and physical force in man is in some supernatural way centred in the hair of his head. As an instance of this, Karsten refers back to the well known legend about Samson, the hero who lost his strength as soon as Delilah had shorn him of his hair. Among us Northeners, as among other European peoples, the belief has also existed

[1] It is, inter alia, from Stolpe's works — e. g. Stolpe (1) — a well known fact that these seemingly purely geometrical ornaments of primitive peoples often can be traced to symbolic pictography. But symbolic pictures may, in their turn, have been developed out of geometrical designs. »Von den Steinen is now of opinion that a whole group of so called geometrical ornaments have evolved from textile designs, but that they, in being transposed from plaited or woven work to other materials, and carried out in engraving or painting, then embarked upon an independent existence, finally carrying with them a whole series of the most varied pictorial ideas, according to the requirements of the artist's inspiration, and that these latter creations had no essential connexion with the original geometrical designs.« The passage within the quotation marks is a summary made by Seler of von den Steinen's opinion as regards certain ornaments. Seler (1), p. 48.

[2] Cf. also Karsten (4), p. 152 (1), pp. 14, 33 and 34 (2), bottom picture in plate following p. 33, and Nordenskiöld (13), pp. 89—91, and 105.

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826 that the hair in certain magic rites could represent the person from whom it had been taken.[1] We find a similar belief existent among the Choroti who, because of it, carefully burn the hairs that they cut off or pluck out. They also believe that the souls of the dead, as well as evil spirits, are [764] capable of working harm on the living by means of the hair, and on this belief is based the custom of the Choroti women of cutting off this adornment on the death of their husbands.[2] Similarly, the practice universally prevalent among the Choroti of plucking out eyebrows, eyelashes and other hairs of the face, the hairs of the armpits and about the genital parts, is probably due to this belief.[3] When a Choroti Indian takes a scalp, or fixes the scalp lock of a slain foe under his frontlet (see pp. 60, 61 and 103), it is probable that he considers that he has not only succeeded in obtaining a material trophy, but that the possession of the scalp or scalp lock to some certain extent confers upon him power over the spirit of his fallen adversary.[4]

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Fig. 185. Bone awl for blood-letting. Probably made out of an ulna of a puma. The awl is wrapped round with a red, woollen fillet, to prevent it from penetrating too deeply into the muscles. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/1. Riksm. 03. 3. 82.

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Fig. 186. Bone awl for blood-letting; also used for tattooing. Probably made from an ulna of a raptorial bird. The awl is wrapped round with grey and red woollen yarn (the latter nethermost) so as not to enter too deeply into the flesh. Choroti. Gran Chaco. Bolivia. 1/1. Riksm. 03. 3. 83.

In the foregoing (pp. 63 and 75) I have mentioned that the Choroti on certain occasions perform a kind of magic blood-letting by means of bone awls. I have also given an account of the Indian conception of the effects of this kind of blood-letting (see pp. 63 and 64). I will now add that I think it probable that the *material* of which the awl consists also plays a certain part.

Nordenskiöld has observed that the Ashluslay, when they are out looking for nests of wild bees, prick themselves above the eyes with a

[1] Even as early as in the Wærend law, mention is made of hair being used in witchcraft.
[2] See page 182.
[3] Karsten (4), p. 10.
[4] Cf. Karsten (4), p. 60.